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YARMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MAINE GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 18, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Sara D'Appolonia of Yarmouth High School** as its **2017-18 Gatorade Maine Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. D'Appolonia is the first Gatorade Maine Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Yarmouth High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes D'Appolonia as Maine's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in June, D'Appolonia joins an elite alumni association of past state soccer award-winners, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Steve Cherundolo (1996-97, Mt. Carmel HS, Calif.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, 2002-03, East Brunswick HS, N.J.), Matt Besler (2004-05, Blue Valley West HS, Kans.), Jack Harrison (2013-14, Berkshire HS, Mass.), and Mallory Pugh (2014-15, Mountain Vista HS, Colo.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-7 senior forward/midfielder led the Clippers to an 18-0 record and a second-straight Class B state championship this past season. D'Appolonia scored 33 goals and passed for 25 assists, including a goal and two assists in a 9-0 win over Presque Isle High in the state title game. A two-time Maine Soccer Coaches Association's Class B Player of the Year, she is a three-time First Team Class B All-State selection and concluded her prep soccer career with 63 goals and 65 assists.

D'Appolonia has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and food bank in addition to donating her time as a youth soccer coach and mentor. "Sara is the best high school girls player from Maine I've coached against in a long time," said Kieran McCormick, head coach of Gray-New Gloucester High. "She scored and created goals from all positions. She was the 'X factor' that made them unbeatable."

D'Appolonia maintained an A average in the classroom. Taking advantage of NCAA early signing rules, D'Appolonia inked a financial-aid agreement that paved the way for her to enroll at the University of Delaware. She graduated from high school in January and attended classes this past spring semester.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Two-time winner D'Appolonia joins Gatorade Maine Girls Soccer Players of the Year Opal Curless (2015-16, Mount Desert Island High School), Cassie Symonds (2014-15 & 2013-14, Windham High School), Caitlin Bucksbaum (2012-13 & 2011-12, Falmouth High School), Allison Walton (2010-11 & 2009-10, Brunswick High School), Elise Amioka (2008-09, Marshwood High School), Rachele Burns (2007-08, Gorham High School), and Kelsey Wilson (2006-07, Gorham High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, D'Appolonia will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants – one for each sport – will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit www.gatorade.com/poy.

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